The Christian's Inheritance.

A

SERMON

AT THE

FUNERAL

Of the Reverend

GABRIEL TOWERSON, DD.

Late Rector of St. *Andrew Undershaft*, and of *Welwyn* in *Hertford-shire.*

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By *GEORGE STANHOPE*, D. D.
Chaplain in Ordinary to His Majesty.

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ROM. viii. 17.

If Children, then Heirs, Heirs of God, and Joynt-heirs with Chriſt.

BEhold what manner of Love the Father hath beſtow'd upon us, that we ſhould be call'd the Sons of God! ſays St. *John*, (1 Ep. III. 1.) but as if even that Love, wonderful as it is, were yet too little, behold another and greater Privilege aſſerted to us by St. *Paul!* For, whereas among Men, tho' Parents may extend their Affection to all their Off-ſpring equally, yet Cuſtom and Convenience give Advantage to ſome Children above others in Point of Intereſt and Fortune, Our Heavenly Father's Bounty is as diffuſive as his Family, and the Prerogative of this Spiritual Race ſet much above that of Common Sons. For it is the unparallell'd Privilege of Chriſtians, to be like ſo many Firſt-born; We are not only admitted to the Title of Children, but are joyn'd with God's Only-begotten in his Royalties and Poſſeſſions too, and have a Right of Inheritance convey'd to every one of us: Inſomuch that the Apoſtle here makes This to be a neceſſary Conſequence of the former; *The Spirit it ſelf* (ſays he) *beareth witneſs with our Spirit, that we are the Children of God*, (Ver. 16.) from whence he infers in the Words of my Text, *And if Children, then Heirs, Heirs of God, and Joynt-heirs with Chriſt.*

My Intention from these Words at present is,

I. *First*, To give some Reasons, why the Title of Good Men to the Happiness and Rewards of the next World, shou'd be represented to us under the Notion of an Inheritance.

II. *Secondly*, To shew what Influence this Consideration ought, and may reasonably be expected, to have upon us: and then,

III. *Lastly*, To apply my self, from the foregoing Particulars, to the Occasion of our assembling here together at this time. Of These as fully, and yet as briefly too, as the Dignity of the Subject, and the Shortness of my Warning will permit.

I. *First*, I will lay before you some Reasons, why, among other Representations of our Happiness and Rewards in the next World, This in particular of an Inheritance should be made choice of for the Comfort and Encouragement of Good Men: And They (among others which perhaps might properly enough be insisted upon) seem to be more especially these Four that follow.

First, This might be done out of a gracious Design, to confirm our Hope, and establish even an assur'd Expectation of our future Happiness. We are told elsewhere in this Epistle, that * *Eternal Life is the Gift of God*; And so it most certainly is, and we are bound to believe, and thankfully to receive it as such; But in the mean while had This been propounded only as a *Gift*, that Term could never be a just Foundation for

* Ch. VI. 23.

for ſo firm and great a Degree of Confidence, as frail and wretched Mortals ſtand in need of, to carry them through all the Hardſhips and Temptations of a dangerous and troubleſome World. For a Gift naturally implies ſomething ſo free and arbitrary in the Giver, as that it ſhou'd depend entirely upon his own mere Motion and Grace, whether it ever be beſtow'd or not. But now by terming it an Inheritance, we are referred to the Method of Father's ſetling Eſtates upon their Sons, for a true Underſtanding of Our Caſe. We can make out our Title, and produce the Deeds of Conveyance, even the ſure, the glorious Promiſes of *Him who cannot lye*, and *whoſe Gifts are without repentance*. The Antients, we know, never adopted any, but with a deſign of conferring all the Advantages of Natural-born Children upon them; and for that reaſon they took this Remedy, as a Supply for iſſue of their own. Our Heavenly Father hath adopted Us with the ſame kind Intentions, though he cou'd not be driven to it by the ſame Neceſſity: And in thus doing he hath wonderfully interwoven His Bounty and Our Right. To that Bounty alone it is, that we owe our having any Title at all to everlaſting Bleſſedneſs. But ſince he hath thought fit to admit us into the quality of Children, we are thenceforth allow'd to put in our Claim. And, provided we be guilty of no Offence, which may evacuate this Right, and provoke him to cut off the Entail; he is ſo far from condemning our Claim of Arrogance and Preſumption, that he requires us to depend upon him for the making it good, and commends our Faith and filial Truſt when we do ſo.

Secondly,

Secondly, As this manner of Expreſſion might be intended to beget in Good Men a more ſtedfaſt Expectation of their future Happineſs, ſo might it likewiſe be choſen to check all unreaſonable opinion of their own Performances. When the the Scriptures, in ſome other Paſſages, declare That Happineſs to be the Reward of Men's Obedience, Partiality, and the dear Love of our ſelves, are apt to ſtep in, and blow us up with lofty Imaginations of I know not what mighty Deſert in us. How apt Humane Nature is to indulge theſe Swellings of the Mind, and to perſuade it ſelf, that even the Word of God hath countenanc'd ſuch Vanity, we need not go far to learn. The wicked, and but too ſucceſsful Pains will teach us, which have been taken in ſome other Communions *, to bring Men off from the too mean and mortifying thoughts of their own Unworthineſs, and to exalt them with a Belief that they are able even to Merit at the Hands of their Great Maſter and Maker. Thus far is true indeed, That God requires Sincerity and Good-works, and hath appointed Theſe as the Condition of our Happineſs: But alas! there is a very wide difference between beſtowing that Happineſs, for the ſake, and ſtrictly upon the account of our Services, and declaring, that he will not beſtow it without them. And, if we rightly conſider the Matter, it will be found, I think, that the Promiſing Heaven under the Notion of an Inheritance, does effectually overthrow all ſuch inſolent Pretenſions. God hath not hereby engaged to admit the Diſobedient and Refractory: 'Tis true. Stubbornneſs or Apoſtacy may alter the Caſe ſtill, and blaſt

* Si quis dixerit Hominis juſtificati bona opera ita eſſe dona Dei, ut non ſint etiam bona ipſius juſtificati merita, aut ipſum juſtificatum bonis operibus —non *vere* mereri augmentum gratiæ, vitam æternam, & ipſius vitæ æternæ—conſecutionem atque etiam gloriæ augmentum, anathema ſit. *Conc. Trident. Seſſ.* VI. *Can.* XXXII.

blaſt our moſt promiſing Hopes: but it will not follow from thence, that thoſe hopes of Inheriting have our own Works, (even as done in obedience to, and by the Grace of Chriſt) for their proper, and adequate, and only Foundation. Suppoſe a Servant of the greateſt Diligence imaginable, His Behaviour may poſſibly deſerve better of the Family, than That of any Child in it: But yet the greateſt Diligence will not procure that Servant an equal Share of Affection with thoſe Children, nor any Title to the Eſtate among them. This Inſtance makes it plain, that the ſtanding in ſuch a Capacity, and bearing ſuch a particular Relation to the Maſter and Diſpoſer of thoſe Poſſeſſions, is the true and fundamental Ground of Inheritance; and accordingly we find the Streſs of St. *Paul's* Argument in my Text laid here, *If Children then Heirs.*

The Doctrine then of *meriting by Works*, properly ſo call'd; and the Notion of *inheriting the Kingdom of Heaven*, can never ſtand together; Becauſe our Pretenſions to inherit commence with our Son-ſhip, and depend upon our Second, and Spiritual Birth. Now it is acknowledg'd on all hands, and affirmed by this Apoſtle (Ver. 15.) that we are the *Sons of God by Adoption*, and that this is a Privilege owing wholly to Chriſt, and peculiar to Faith in Him. It is alſo confeſt, that we become Sons, and conſequently Heirs in our Baptiſm. So that (by the Practice of even Thoſe who ſtand up for the merit of Good Works) the Generality of Chriſtians are now admitted to a Right of Inheritance, at a time when they cannot have any Works of their own at all. And

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tho' it ſhou'd be granted, that what is promiſed then, be, in the Eye of God, look't upon as perform'd, with regard to the Intention of the Engagers, and the preſent Incapacity of the Party promiſed for, yet even thoſe Works which follow after, are not ſo much the Cauſe, as the Proof of our being Children. They demonſtrate us to be faithful indeed; They convince the World that we anſwer our Character; and They ſupport the Conſcience with unreprovable Aſſurances, that provided we perſevere in doing ſo, we ſhall not fail hereafter to be in actual Poſſeſſion, thoſe happy glorious Heirs, which at preſent we can but be in Expectation and Reverſion only.

Thirdly, By being ſtyled Heirs of God, we are inform'd, how ſtable and laſting a Good this Happineſs will prove. The Certainty of it with reſpect to Us I have already ſpoken to in my Firſt Particular; That which I regard at preſent is the Continuance and Certainty of the Thing in it ſelf. All other Tenures are ſubject to Limitations, and determine at a certain Period of Time; but Eſtates of Inheritance know no term of Years. Theſe deſcend on in the ſame Line, and are as ſure as any thing, in the changeable State of Affairs we now live in, can poſſibly be made. When therefore the Holy Spirit makes choice of this Compariſon, he juſtifies thoſe Comforts Good Men take, that a ſmall Matter will not ſhake their Title to Heaven at this diſtance; And that, when once thoſe Joys are in our Hands, nothing can ever deprive us of them more. I know very well, they have enough to command our Eſteem,

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and engage our very vehement Pursuit, without respecting their Continuance; and that a longer or a shorter Term does not change the nature of Things, but is a foreign and additional Perfection only. But yet methinks we may allow this Consideration to have more weight with regard to Another World, than it can possibly carry in any temporal Enjoyment whatsoever: And it may be said with great Truth, that the Life to come could never make us happy, if it were not Eternal. For it could not but be a terrible Disturbance and Damp to those Pleasures, to think that they must one Day be parted with. And, though that Day were set at never so great a distance, yet the Mind of Man is perpetually looking forward, and totally disposed to anticipate its own Losses and Miseries. I need not urge with Argument, what all of us feel at this very Moment, and by the instance of Mortality now before us, how hard it is to have what we highly value, and most dearly love, torn from us. And the more sensible Concern this present Affliction gives us, the more easily may we convince our selves, how cutting the loss, and how cruel a Check too fears of losing That Bliss must needs be, to which no Good on Earth can bear any Proportion.

So then, The more refin'd and worthy Conceptions we have of Heaven in other Respects, the more absolute necessity we find, for the compleating our Happiness there, to conceive of it as a Continuing City, and a Mansion of Everlasting Glory. For it could not be Heaven, nor were it possible

possible for our Contemplations and Hopes to dwell upon it, with a perfect Acquiescence and untroubl'd Satisfaction, were we not well assured, that the Joys of it out-live the utmost stretch of Time, and are *such as no Man takes from us.*

Fourthly, By this Similitude of an Inheritance the Scripture might design to intimate, the sufficient, the plentiful, the exceeding abundant Provision, made for every Heir of this Bounteous Heavenly Father. Younger Branches of a Family, we know, must be content with such Proportions, as their Parent's Wisdom thinks fit to set out for them: And this is most commonly done with great Tenderness and Caution, reserving the Honour and Estate of the House to be supported by the Heir himself. But We, (it seems) are All of us *Heirs of God, and Joint Heirs with Christ*; not put off with the too often Distributions of a partial Father, but admitted into a full and equal Enjoyment of the Whole. For, though the Inheritances upon Earth are confin'd to One, or a very Few, and must be so, because they are short and narrow, yet the Heavenly one is much otherwise, by reason of its infinite Nature and Extent; A Nature and Extent so large and vast, that not no one Person hath a whit the less for any other Persons great Abundance. It is an Excellency peculiar to this Heritage, that (according to * St. *Austine's* description of it) *The*

* Hæreditas, in quâ Christi coheredes sumus, non minuitur copiâ Possessorum; nec fit angustior numerositate cohæredum; sed tanto est multò quanto paucis, tanta singulis, quanta omnibus. Comm. in Psalm. XLIX.

Plenty

Plenty which the Possessors find and use there, never diminishes the Thing possessed: Nor does the innumerable Multitude of Partakers cramp up any Man's Enjoymant, or incroach upon his Portion. It is as large to Many as to Few; and each single Possessor enjoys it as fully as all put together.

Indeed the Proportions of our Bliss are so far from being scanty there, that all considering Persons have believ'd one part of it to consist in the Enlarging and Exalting our Faculties, and putting us into a Condition of receiving more than, that now we are capable so much as of imagining. Should those Joys be imparted to us in this mortal imperfect State, a small measure of them, in comparison, would overwhelm us quite, and let in Pleasures, Torrents of Pleasures too many and too exquisite for frail Nature to bear. What vast Idea's then should we do well to form, what a thankful Sense should we always preserve of our Gracious Father's Love, whose Bounty gives all we can receive; and, rather than we should be stinted in our Happiness, prepares and qualifies our Minds to receive yet more and more? What Care can be too assiduous to attain such an Inheritance as This? What Esteem, what Desire, what Eagerness too great? What noble and excellent Effects should the very hope and prospect of it, even at this distance, have upon us? More indeed and greater than are possible for me worthily to describe, or convenient at this time to attempt; let it suffice therefore [illegible] touch upon *Four*, in proportion to [illegible]

siderations already treated of, and more immediately resulting from them. And the representing these to you was what I propounded in the beginning of this Discourse, for my Second General Head.

II. *First* then, From the Confirmation of our Hope and Assurance of Everlasting Blessedness arising from its being represented as an Inheritance, 'tis plain there ought to proceed a just Value and Veneration for those Divine Writings, which certain this Title to us. For, besides the advantage which the Scriptures have above all other Books, consider'd barely as a Rule of Manners, there is this unquestionable Preference due to them, that they discover to us the Nature of our Souls, and their Condition in another World much more clearly, than Mankind ever could have found without them. *Life and Immortality* are most truly said to be *brought to light through the Gospel*, since here alone we meet with a distinct Account of all God's Dispensations concerning us, and can trace the several dark, mysterious Steps both of our Misery and Salvation. What we were originally by Nature, What afterwards by Corruption, and What since by Grace. How full of Death and Despair our Condition was formerly, and to what a *lively hope* this heavenly Father hath now *begotten us again*. So that from hence we derive all our Dependence, and in this Great Charter of Mercies and Privileges have contain'd both our Conveyances of Right, and the Conditions of our obtaining it.

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And now, If These be the Contents of this most Holy Book, O! with what Reverence should we embrace, O! with what Diligence should we peruse it? Observe the pardon'd Malefactor, what respect he pays to that Act of Grace, which gives his forfeit Life; see the longing Heir, how tenderly he values his Deeds of Settlement and Entail; or imagine, if that be possible, what delight the greedy Worldling takes in his Bills, and his Bonds, and his Mortgages; with what glee he spends Hours and Days in considering the Advantages to be made from them, and providing against any Forfeiture, which might be incurr'd by neglecting the Terms of his Covenants; And then give me leave to acquaint you, that all these Marks of Esteem, and Gratitude, and pendent Care, are much more due to the Blessed Writings of God: For These are the Instruments of our Release from a Misery worse than ten thousand Deaths; and Settlements of *an Inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away for ever in the Heavens.*

Is it not then a most intolerable Reproach, that Christians shall suffer this Divine Volume to be neglected? That They, whose best Hopes are only here, shall so far forget the Consequences of it to them, as even to account it a Full and a Weariness to lay out any part of their Time and Pains upon a right understanding of it? Nay, (which is most absurd and monstrous) that Any who call themselves by that Name, should employ their impotent Malice and wicked Wit, to find Flaws in their own Rule; and labour [illegible] to

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make the World believe, that these Instruments are no better than Frauds and Forgeries, and that the only Mark of Men of Sense, is to reason themselves out of Heaven and Immortality? But I have neither Time nor Inclination to pursue that just Indignation any further, which no good Man can be insensible of at these daring Profanations of God and his Reveal'd Will; such as ought not even to be nam'd but with detestation, and cannot be endured, without exposing not only Men's Souls but even their Civil Rights and Temporal Safety to manifest hazard and inconvenience. For Corruption of Principles naturally slides into Dissoluteness of Manners; and some of the Grounds upon which Reveal'd Religion is rejected, if pursu'd through all their just Consequences, will certainly destroy the Natural too; and overthrow not only the Communications, but even the very Being of God Himself. But to return from this most unwilling Digression, (which Wo to this wicked Generation among whom we live, that there is any occasion for:) I proceed to put you in Mind,

Secondly, That, As the representing our Title to Heaven by an Inheritance might be intended to abate all unreasonable Opinion of our own Merits, So the result of it is An Obedience recommended by true Thankfulness and profound Humility. Almighty God hath taken the Course of all prudent Fathers, who, tho' they deny their Children no Testimony of their Affection that can in reason be thought fit for them; yet take to keep it in their own Power to punish their Ob-

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nacy and undutiful Behaviour. And thus We Christians want no Ground for Hope, but we have not the least foundation for Security and Presumption. Our Condition is that of Children indeed, and This implies much Tenderness and great Compassion; that our Weaknesses shall be pity'd, our Heats of Youth pardon'd, our Spots overlook'd, provided still they be Spots of God's Children; such only as proceed from Inadvertency, or Infirmity, and not from any settl'd purpose to offend. The right use therefore of this Title is to improve such Kindness into the strictest and most effectual Engagements of Love and Duty to so good a Father; To remember, that we are still upon our good Behaviour, and though Heirs, not Heirs expectant only; That even our being such is meerely from Another; that our Sonship, not our Desert, conferr'd the Title; and that it is wholly and solely through the Only Begotten and Beloved, that We have this access to, or are at all accepted of the Father. That so glorious a Reward then is appointed for our poor and partial, our imperfect and unworthy Labours, we owe to the Grace and Munificence of the Almighty Disposer *, and the inexpressible Love of the Meritorious Purchaser: But still God's hands are not ty'd up by this exuberant Goodness, so as that no Contumacy shou'd cancel our Title; nor is He

* Si gratia vocatur, gratis datur: si gratis datur, nulla præcesserunt merita tua, ut detur. Nam si præcesserunt merita tua, merces non imputatur secundum Gratiam, sed secundum Debitum. Si ergo dicis præcessisse merita tua, te vis laudari, non Deum: —Converte ergo te ad merita tua, vide illa mala fuisse; ut non tibi deberetur nisi supplicium, non præmium. Et cum videris quid tibi per meritum debeatur, agnoscis quid per gratiam donetur, & sacrificio laudis glorificas Deum. *Augustin. in Psal. XXXI. in fine.*

that

that *is greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven* above acknowledging himself *less than the least of all the Mercies, and of all the Truth*, which he condescends to shew his obedient Children, and faithful Servants.

Thirdly, Look upon this Notion of an Inheritance as denoting the Continuance of our Happiness in the next World; and thus it may reasonably be expected to reconcile the Thoughts of Death to our Minds. So, I mean, as both to mitigate our own Fears of it, and to abate our Concern for the Friends who are taken away from us. And This would be a very considerable Advantage indeed; For it is certain, that no Man stands more in need of Consolation and Support than when we either come to die our selves, or to part with Those who are very useful and dear to us.

Now the natural Aversion to Soul and Body separating, may well be allow'd to cost us some Disorder, when we find there is no Remedy but these two kind Companions must be torn asunder, and that the great Encounter with our last dreadful Enemy approaches. And yet the Miseries of the present Life are so many, the Enjoyments and Advantages of it so difficult to be attained, and so defective if ever they be attained, that Many considering Heathens have thought leaving the World no such mighty matter. The World, which, to all who make a true estimate of it, is so vain at best, and withal so uncertain, that it could never appear worth a considering Man's while to take up his rest, and abide for ever in it,

But, I confess, Christianity hath discover'd another very just ground of Fear, which the Heathen World could not be so sensible of. For if Death be consider'd as that which consigns us over to Judgment, and if upon that Judgment depend a Doom irreversible to all Eternity; No wonder if this cast some Men into a mighty Consternation and Dread. Such whose Lives have been what they cannot think of rendring any tolerable account for; but are sentenc'd by their own guilty Consciences before-hand, and sadly sensible, that to die will be so far from finishing, that it is like to prove to Them the beginning of Sorrows. Now I desire it may be consider'd, that my present Argument is of no force to abate of this Fear; nor hath either my Text, or any Passage in the whole Gospel, one Syllable of Comfort, for Men that die in the Terrors of obstinate and unrepented Wickedness. The only help for wicked Men is this, not to spend their time in vain Lamentations and idle Amazements, but begin in good earnest to amend their Lives. And then as they grow more fit for Death and Judgment, by the very same Proportions they will feel their fear of these things grow less.

My Business therefore is with Christians, not barely in Word and Profession, but also in Deed and in Truth. And whatever Loathness to leave the World these Men may find in themselves, may be very much brought over by serious and frequent Reflections upon the Inheritance of Glory now under Consideration, and by studying the Scriptures, which describe, and recommend, and

promise, and assure it to us. Their Heart by this means will be where their Chief Treasure is. Their Souls will loosen by degrees, and their Affections be wean'd from this World, and all it can pretend to, upon a thorough Conviction, how false and floating, how empty and trifling all is here below; and how pure and exalted, how fixt and durable, how solid and satisfactory those Pleasures are, which God hath prepared for Good Men; How ample a Recompence they make even for the most difficult Services; and how far they outweigh all that we can possibly undergo for the obtaining them. Outweigh, did I say? pardon me for putting them into the Balance together; To name them at the same time is in some sort to disparage them; for so St. *Paul* hath told us in the very next Verse; *I reckon that the Sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with that Glory which shall be revealed in us.*

And now, What should hinder the Mind of a good and a considering Man from meeting Death with Courage and Comfort, and looking upon the Sickness which ushers it in, as the Messenger of Good News to him? For, Is it not so, to be translated, not only to the End, but to the Fruit and exceeding great Reward of all his Care and Toil? Is it not so, to exchange a decaying and troublesome State, for One, whose most exquisite Joys are without any Interruption, without any Conclusion? And, though Flesh and Blood will start and give back, and even This so happy Exchange cannot yet be made without the parting

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Ceremonies of Agonies and Convulsions, yet the Comforts of a Devout Mind must needs be much enlarged upon the nearer approaches to Bliss, as that new Scene of Things opens upon it by degrees, and gives a more distinct View of that glorious and beautiful Place into which the Man is entring. And We, whose Office calls us to wait about Death-beds, can sometimes observe such Peace of Conscience, such Calmness and Content, such Lightnings of a Soul upon its Flight, such overflowing Comforts, and ravishing Transports, as, notwithstanding all the fallacy of that disorder and painful struggle in the visible and outward Man, do fully persuade us, that no Men stay behind in the World, half so happy, or so well satisfy'd, as These Men go out of it.

The Blessings of our Future State, even in this distant Prospect, might reasonably be expected to put us upon the Wing, and tempt us almost to run into the Arms of Death, out of meer Impatience to get at them. But our wise Creator hath put the Bar of Flesh and Blood, and natural Appetite betwixt; and commands, that we should at least be contented to wait his good Leisure of calling us to himself. But, although to hasten our own Passage by violent Means, be in effect to shut our selves out from Heaven for ever; yet since we have these Hopes and Promises to support us in the Conflict, we ought methinks at least not tamely to bewail and deprecate that very thing, which must put us into the actual possession of our Hopes. For is it not strange Infatuation to be in love with Labour and Hazard, to be sorry

that the Evening, the time of receiving our Wages is come; and all this upon that idle and vulgar Pretence, that Death is the gastly Destroyer of Mankind, and the King of Terrors; whereas in truth he is so only to the Guilty and the Unprepared. But serious Piety, and Peace with God, and a quiet Conscience, These have the power to make him tame and gentle. They overcome and bind that grim *strong Man, and take from him all his Armour wherein he trusted.*

Again, The same Consideration which ought to have such Efficacy in removing these Fears for our selves, does likewise extend it self to our Griefs for Others. Our immoderate Griefs I mean: For Christianity places no Excellence in the stifling all natural Affection, and rendring Men insensible of any tender Impressions. It only requires that the Reins should be kept always in our own hands, and, when that Debt of Tears is paid, which Nature and Decency require, that we should then suffer our Minds to be composed by Reason, and hearken to the Corrections and Comforts of Religion. And what can administer more substantial, more successful Comfort, than to consider the Joys of Eternity, and, that the Friends whose absence we deplore, are removed to the Company of Saints and Angels, to the blessed Presence of the Almighty, to the same happy Mansions of perfect Knowledge, and Love, and Joy, with the Son and Lamb of God himself? That they are now above the Hazards of Fortune, the Troubles, and Cares, and Perplexities of the World, and, (which is best of all) freed from all danger of offending God,

God, and wounding their own Consciences by Sin any more. If we have a serious Belief, that such is the Condition of our deceased Brethren, and yet all This will not appease our Sorrows, how just is that reproach of *Absalom* to *Hushai* upon another occasion, *Is this thy kindness for thy Friend?* 2 Sam. xvi. 17. Does it become the Tenderness of a Relation, to lament without ceasing, not like her in the Prophet, for *those that are not*, but for those who now have begun to be in Perfection. Who after the Waves and Tossings of a tempestuous World, are now themselves rejoycing, because they are at rest, and God hath brought them to that Haven, where They and every good Christian would be. Let us then in such case suppose, that we hear the released Soul admonishing us, in our Saviour's Terms to the Daughters of *Jerusalem*, *Weep not for me, but weep for your selves*: For our Selves indeed, who are still floating upon the Billows, driven to and fro by the violent Gusts of Passions and Lusts, of Cares and Temptations, and in continual danger of making shipwrack of Faith and a good Conscience. In a word, 'Tis easie to convince our selves, how absurd all Excesses of this kind must needs be, by this single Reflection, That the End of all God's Promises, and our own most painful Endeavours, is to put Us hereafter into That which we believe to be Their Condition now. And, (O monstrous Inconsistence of extravagant Passion!) we refuse to be comforted, because They are what We, when in our right Mind, would give ten thousand Worlds to be: Blessed for ever, far above all our Imaginations, far above all their own Hopes. Luke xxiii. 28.

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In the mean while, till God's own good time come of making Us ſo too, let us remember in the *Fourth* and laſt place, that this Inheritance, as importing the Sufficiency of that Proviſion made for us by our Heavenly Father, ought to inſpire us with Meekneſs and Contentment under any Diſpoſals of Providence in this preſent Life. What
Gal. iv. 1, 2. St. *Paul* tells the *Galatians*, that *the Heir, ſo long as he is a Child, differeth nothing from a Servant, though he be Lord of all, but is under Tutors and Governors, until the time appointed of the Father*, is equally applyable to our Caſe. We are here in a State of Nonage and Education, under the wiſe diſcipline of One, who nicely underſtands our ſeveral Tempers, and ſuits his Methods accordingly. Some are of ingenuous and eaſie Diſpoſitions, and Them he wins by ſoft indulgent means: Others are rugged and tough, and to Thoſe a ſharper hand is neceſſary: And if a Third ſort, not to be wrought upon either way, do not yet feel the Rod ſo often as their Fellows, this is not becauſe they deſerve it leſs, but becauſe they are given over as incorrigible. By this eaſie and familiar Alluſion, we are taught what Interpretations to make of God's Providence, and how to juſtifie the different Proceedings of it toward us. Imagine within your ſelves, what an accompliſh'd Generation we ſhou'd have, if the Fondneſs of Mothers, and the Humours of Children were to preſcribe Rules of Education; and then you cannot but diſcover abundant reaſon for ſubmitting to the Diſpoſals of a Father, who tempers his tendereſt Affection with unerring Prudence.

Nay

Nam pro jucundis aptiſſima quæque.

Almighty God weighs our Caſe and our Wants; He aims not ſo much at our Eaſe, as our Improvement, and diſtributes ſuch things, and in ſuch Meaſures, as he ſees moſt proper and profitable; without troubling himſelf to conſider what would be moſt acceptable. He admits of no ſuch Heirs, as are a Scandal to their Eſtates, and a Reproach to their Families; but trains all his true Sons up in the School of Piety and Virtue, teaches them to underſtand the value of their Portion, and brings them to a reſemblance of their Father. When they are ripen'd thus for Heaven, and made fit Company for Saints and Angels, he then receives them to himſelf, and abundantly compenſates the ſhort Hardſhips of their Education, by putting into their hands the Fruit and End of all their Patience, even their glorious and eternal Inheritance.

I have now finiſhed what I deſigned from the Text, and ſhall not fear that you'll think I detain you too long upon my Third General Head, which relates to the Occaſion of our preſent Meeting.

III. The proper End of Diſcourſes of this kind, I never took to be that of framing new Panegyricks upon our departed Friends: If any thing can add to the indecency of Flattery from a Pulpit, it is the employing it upon Perſons of a Profeſſion, which of all others ought to be the moſt above it. But, alas! this Conſideration

and

and ought to temper what I have to say; yet, when God hath given us the Advantage of excellent Examples, it may justly seem Ingratitude to Him, and Injustice to our selves, not to mention some part, at least of those Commendable Qualities, which Good Men have left behind them, as a Pattern worthy our diligent Imitation.

The Audience and Place in which I stand may seem more particularly to require This at my hands; which yet I shall endeavour so to manage, that You, who have had the Happiness of a longer and more intimate Acquaintance with our deceased Brother, than my self, shall not only bear witness to the truth of it, but confess at the same time that I bear a due regard to the Modesty so peculiar in Him, whose Virtues I am about to give a very brief and imperfect Representation of. And to make the short remainder of my Discourse the more methodical and of a Piece with what hath gone before; it shall be my care to confine my self to those particular Effects, which I told you this Consideration of Eternal Happiness being proposed in the quality of an Inheritance ought in all reason to have upon every one of us.

The *First* of These, you well remember, was a just Value, and profound Veneration for the Holy Scriptures. And how agreeable This was to his Character, not You alone, who liv'd under his more immediate Care, and enjoy'd the Benefit of a long and painful Ministry from him, but the Nation in general have been convinc'd by those worthy Labours, which appear in Publick Writings, so much the more valuable, as the Subject and

Design

Deſign of them is of greater and more general Importance, That of eſtabliſhing the moſt concerning Truths of the Chriſtian Religion; and illuſtrating thoſe common Principles, which our Excellent Church hath thought neceſſary for forming the Lives and Judgments of all her Members. And this he hath done, if not by all the artful and enticing Words of Man's Wiſdom, yet with ſolid and ſubſtantial Arguments from Reaſon, with proper Authorities from Scripture and Antiquity, and with ſuch happy Force and full Conviction, as to deſerve a Recommendation from one of our * Reverend Prelates, for the Study and Inſtruction of thoſe, whoſe buſineſs it is to inſtruct others. To render his indefatigable Pains of yet more diffuſive Influence, he hath likewiſe compoſed a † Tract in a Language more generally underſtood, which not only our own, but other Countries may I hope ſhortly reap the benefit of. In a Word, His Time was employ'd, and his Delight ſeem'd wholly to be placed in Divine Studies; Theſe were his Buſineſs, his Entertainment, his Company, his Diverſion; So careful was he to employ the Hours of a moſt retir'd Life, in the beſt and moſt beneficial manner; Theſe were his Comfort in Afflictions, his Support under Hardſhips and Cares; Theſe preſerv'd his Mind from all criminal degrees of Anxiety, and, (as himſelf hath profeſſed with great Satisfaction) ſoftned thoſe Troubles which a Man more addicted to the World muſt even have been ſwallow'd up in: But by Their means his Soul was diſengag'd, and raiſed above the World, and his Converſation in Heaven: Happily indeed

* *Lord Biſhop of* Sarum *in his* Paſtoral Care.

† Tractat. in Epiſt. ad Philipp.

for himself, tho' in the common Judgment of Flesh and Blood less so for those he left behind, since those unwearied Labours, which manifestly contributed to his more speedy removal thither, hath deprived Them of his longer Direction and Assistance upon Earth.

The *Second* good Effect I mentioned, as naturally flowing from my Text, was That of an Obedience full of Thankfulness and Humility. And this appear'd so eminently in Him, that notwithstanding all the Goodness so conspicuous in his Conversation, no sign of Censoriousness or Spiritual Pride was to be found in him. But, though this Particular relate more immediately to Men's deportment towards God, yet I must beg leave in the Application to extend it something farther.

Gratitude to God is due, not only for Spiritual, but Temporal Mercies; for He is our Great Benefactor, and the sole Author of all our Blessings of every kind. And, Since those Blessings are often convey'd to us by the ministry and mediation of Men, no Man can be truly thankful, who is wanting in his Acknowledgments to those Persons, whose Hearts God hath disposed to become the Instruments of handing down his Kindness to us. Here also our deceased Brother performed the part of a truly good Christian, and took due Care to let no good Offices of any sort be buried in Oblivion. He cou'd not content himself with a silent and private Sense of them, but had in particular prepared * a lasting and publick Expression of his Thanks, to our late Excellent Primate; Who, among other Marks of his Care to prefer worthy and

* Epist. Dedicator. *to his Treat on the* Philipp. *to Archbishop* Tillotson.

and uſeful Men, procur'd his promotion to another Benefice, and endeavour'd to make his Worth more viſible, by placing him in our Capital City. Nor did he think it any Indecency, in an Addreſs to ſo Great a Man, to make grateful and honourable mention of that ſeaſonable Addition to his Fortunes, made by a * Reverend Perſon in this Neighbourhood. So ſolicitous was he upon all Occaſions, that no Man's Friendſhip, who had remember'd him, ſhould leave behind it the Reproach of not being as reſpectfully tranſmitted to Poſterity, as it had been worthily placed at the firſt Diſpoſal.

* *Dr.* Tudor, *late Rector of* Tewing *in* Hertfordſhire

Thus again; His Humility gave a peculiar luſtre to the reſt of his Accompliſhments: For in the midſt of all thoſe Endowments both Natural and Acquir'd, he ſeem'd the only Perſon inſenſible of his own Worth. His Temper was Eaſie and Gentle, ſo engaging and inoffenſive, as to win over even Strangers, and Men of different Opinions, to a ſenſible Concern and Kindneſs for him: His Converſation Affable and Courteous, full of Deference and modeſt Reſerve: And, which of all other Qualities beſt proves a true Greatneſs of Soul, ſo Free and Communicative, and Improving withal, ſo perfectly void of Envy, and engroſſing any ſort of Knowledge or Commendation to himſelf, that he ſeem'd to have copy'd after that great Pattern of Meekneſs, *Moſes*, who * rebuked the Narrowneſs of thoſe Spirits, who grudged the Advantages of others for his ſake, and with'd with all his Soul, that *all the Lord's People were Prophets.*

* Numb. xi.

Thirdly. Another Virtue reſulting from the Text, was abating the Fears of our own Death, and moderating our Concern for That of Others. Of the former, that general Reſignation of Temper, very obſervable in him upon all Occaſions, was an abundant Proof; and that Indifference for Life, which I have often heard him chearfully expreſs, excepting only for the ſake of Thoſe, whom yet he committed to God, with a becoming Dependence upon his Providence over them. And more bright no doubt this Virtue wou'd have ſhone in his laſt Hours, had not the Diſeaſe of which he dy'd, ſo violently attack'd his Underſtanding, and left him only ſome few, and thoſe very ſhort Intervals for the exerciſe of it: So few, and ſo ſhort, as allow'd no time ſufficient for the Performance of thoſe Duties moſt neceſſary and uſual in his Condition. But we ought in all Reaſon and Charity to preſume, that, as his Life was the Life of the Righteous, ſo had the Faculties of his Mind been free, his Death wou'd, in a very exemplary manner, have manifeſtly appeared to be the Death of the Righteous too.

For the other Branch of this Argument, Many here preſent, I ſuppoſe, can recollect, with what a Mixture of tender Affection and Chriſtian Conſtancy he ſupported the loſs of his neareſt and dearest Relation; And this too, though it found him then ſmarting under the freſh deep Wound of a ſad and * ſurprizing Diſaſter; and happen'd at a time, when upon all other Conſiderations the Circumſtances of his Family could not but render that Blow very ſenſible and heavy upon him. One Inſtance where-

* *A Son drowned in the Mote of his Houſe.*

of

of relating to my ſelf, I muſt beg your leave to mention: 'Tis, that preſently upon that occaſion, proffering him my Aſſiſtance in the ſupply of his Cure, he made me this (to me then) ſurprizing Anſwer, That Bleſſed be God for his Grace, he had ſoon conquer'd the diſorderly part of his Grief, and found no Relief ſo great as employing himſelf in his Study, and the attendance upon his Duty. This I confeſs to One who thought it always common and eaſie for Men to talk like Philoſophers, but rare and difficult to be ſo in good earneſt, gave me that Idea of his Piety, and Patience, and Firmneſs of Mind, which made me then begin to know the Man, and raiſed my Honour for him ever after.

Laſtly, The only remaining Inference, That of Contentedneſs with the Diſpoſals of Almighty God in this World, was likewiſe very viſible and exemplary in him. That equality of Mind, with which he ſtruggled under a narrow Fortune, and a numerous Family, many now preſent muſt needs be well acquainted with; and a Temper, ſo far from Greedy, that even in things of right his own, he rather choſe to depart from what he could ill be without, than have recourſe to Rigour and extreme Juſtice. He hath frequently declared, that he wanted no increaſe of Honour or Preferment for himſelf, but purely for the ſake of his Children; nor did he upon Their Account deſire more than might preſerve them from Contempt, and ſet them above the Temptations of Want and hard Neceſſity. And This was ſo modeſt and ſo remarkable in a Perſon of ſuch Learning and Labour in his Profeſſion, that it engag'd Mens Wiſhes at leaſt,

and

and Affections, in his Favour: Inſomuch that He, I believe, was one of thoſe few, whoſe any Additions of Good Fortune gave a general Satisfaction, and inſtead of envying, every body who knew him, wou'd have rejoyced to have ſeen them more and greater.

What now remains, but that Each of us from hence gather ſuch Inferences, as may make this Example of Benefit to us, by applying it to our own reſpective Circumſtances: More particularly,

1. That You, firſt, the Orphans of this Deceaſed, imitate his Patience and Meekneſs, and Holy Reſignation to the Will of God: His Charity, and Juſtice, and great Induſtry. *The Generation of the Righteous ſhall be bleſſed*, and *a good Man leaveth an Inheritance for his Children*, ſays the Scripture. Even the beſt of all Inheritances, the Love and tender Regard of him, who is the Father of the Fatherleſs. Think not then his Virtues are loſt and buried with him; no, They will live, and, as He, We ought not to doubt, now reaps the unſpeakable Advantage of them in Heaven, ſo will they ſhed a happy Influence upon You on Earth too; Provided always, that they live in your Practice and careful Imitation alſo; and keep you effectually from all things, which would be a Reproach to the Children of ſuch a Father.

2. That You next of this Pariſh ſeriouſly conſider, how far you are accountable for the long and laborious Miniſtry of ſuch a Paſtor; that a faithful and painful Guide of Souls, is One very conſiderable, among thoſe Talents, which God will reckon with Men for at the laſt Day. And therefore

fore it highly concerns you to recollect and practice thoſe Doctrines, with a Diligence proportionable to His that inculcated them: For, if ſo much good Seed through your neglect produce not much good Fruit, the Ground, aſſure your ſelves, will be curſed and condemned for its Barrenneſs: And the more you might have learned and done; by the Influence of ſuch Inſtruction and ſuch an Example, the heavier ſhall Your Account be, and the more deſervedly dreadful Your Condemnation.

3. That We, *Thirdly*, who have the Honour of the ſame Profeſſion, do, like him, dedicate our Lives and Labours entirely to the Service of God, and the Promotion of his Glory, by ſetting forward the love and practice of Virtue, and the Salvation of Mankind. Eſpecially, that we make it our chief Care to eſtabliſh and ſecure the eſſential and moſt neceſſary parts of Religion; which the ſhameleſs Inſolence and Impiety of the profligate Age we live in, ſeems now, as much as ever, to require from us. And, though all of us cannot do this with His Learning and Abilities, yet it will be our own Fault, if we do not all attempt it with a Diligence and Zeal equal to His. Which if we do, our faithful Endeavours will be accepted and approved, even of Men; but if this Expectation ſhould fail us too, and we find our ſelves unable to effect the Good we intend, yet it is Incouragement ſufficient for us, *to abound in the Work of the Lord, that we are ſure our Labour ſhall not, cannot be in vain in the Lord.*

With

With these Reflections and Holy Resolutions, let us commit the mortal Remains of this Reverend, Worthy, Good Man, to the Dust; *In sure and certain hope of a Resurrection to Life Eternal*; and that, if we be careful, thus as you have heard, to approve our selves *Gods Children*, we shall not fail in his due time, to be made in the best, the most beneficial, and most perfect and glorious Sense of the Text, *Heirs of God, and Joynt-Heirs of Christ. Which he of his infinite Mercy grant for the sake of the Same Jesus Christ his Dear Son and our Blessed Saviour: To whom with the Father and Holy Spirit, Three Persons and One God, be all Honour and Glory, Thanksgiving and Praise now and for evermore.* Amen.

FINIS.

SEcond Remarks upon an Essay concerning *Humane Understanding*. In a Letter address'd to the Author. Being a Vindication of the *First Remarks*, against the Answer of Mr. *Locke*, at the End of his *Reply to the Lord Bishop of* Worcester.

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